

February 12, 2016

California Department of Education
2014-2016 Draft History- Social Science Framework

It is my sad understanding that the California Department of Education is planning to place the controversial story of the Korean comfort women in our American school text books. My big question to you is WHY? Why is such a well over 75 year old controversial issue, which has no relevance to our American history, being added to text books? I am angry and a taxpayer who believes my tax money should not be spent on this type of education for America's young children that will adversely affect our future generations. With anger and disappointment, I submit this email, with supporting attachments, to oppose including the comfort woman story in our American text books.

I submit this objection as a Japanese American Korean War Veteran and will introduce myself. I was born in Redlands California in 1930 and am a second generation American of Japanese Ancestry born, raised and educated in Redlands. I just retired my Land Surveying business in Fullerton, California after 38 years..

As a young boy of 12 years of age, I was forced from my home as a victim of the mass World War II incarceration of over 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast of the United States. In 1950 during the Korean War, in spite of our forced incarceration by the United States Government in WWII, my brother Henry and I volunteered for the U.S. Marine Corps to serve, fight and defend a country with people we did not even know. We lost two very close friends in the Korean War, one was of Mexican descent whom I first met in Kindergarten and 66 years later, still feel responsible for his death. All five sons of my first generation parents from Japan served in the U.S. military in Americas wars. Two in WWII with the highly decorated Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team and three of us were in Korea during the war at the same time..

My objection in no way means I condone or defend any actions of Japan if such atrocities are proven to be true. However, with this letter I am merely defending the integrity of Americans of Japanese ancestry across our nation and for our future generations. The comfort woman issue is not a part of American history and is yet to be documented as accurate. It is based on personal verbal allegations. It certainly does not involve the United States and remains strictly an issue between Japan and Korea.

Your proposal to educate our American children of such a controversial foreign issue is certainly not what I, nor well over 6,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry and the 256 who gave their lives, served and died for in the Korean War. We fought and we died for the love of our country and the freedom of the people of the Republic of Korea. We made our sacrifice for their freedom and their right to come to the United States for a new life, not so they could migrate to the United States and bring shame to our heritage. Japanese Americans have shed their blood in America's wars from World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War and Desert Storm to gain the respect of our nation. To place this totally unrelated issue between Japan and South Korea in our text books is absolutely insane and asinine.

It is not a part of our American history and has no place in our history books. It is detrimental to our Japanese American heritage and reputation earned by our blood and lives that were sacrificed for you, who are now turning your backs to us.

It is well known throughout the Japanese American communities, there is a hatred exercised here in the United States by the Korean people against the Japanese in Japan, but this hatred is exercised here against Japanese Americans in the United States as well.

In 2007, I received an email from a non-Korean professor at a university in Seoul, Korea. He questioned why the university in Korea was still teaching hatred for the Japanese in Japan and asked why they even include the Japanese Americans in the United States. The Japanese Americans certainly do not deserve such disrespect or bigoted treatment. The Korean people should appreciate the Japanese Americans who bravely served and died during the Korean War and helped them gain their freedom to come to America. Veterans of Japanese Ancestry, many who were incarcerated during World War II, are in complete agreement with this objection of including the comfort woman issue in text books. Perhaps the stories of Japanese Americans serving your country in World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War and Desert Storm should be placed in your text books, rather than the irrelevant comfort woman issue.

In 1997, I helped organize and was the president for the first four years of the Japanese American Korean War Veterans Organization. To try and help bridge that hatred gap between the Korean people and the Japanese Americans, our organization, with the permission of the Republic of Korea government built a Memorial near the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea listing each individual name of the 256 Japanese Americans killed in the Korean War. That Memorial is located at Imjin Gak, Paju City in South Korea.

To place these accused atrocities in our text books will not accomplish a thing, except help inflame the current racial bigotry between Japanese Americans and the Korean people within the United States. It will not help bring a resolution or local harmony it will only destroy any benefit the Japanese American Korean War veterans may have gained as a result of the Japanese American Korean War Veterans' Memorial in Paju City, South Korea. I know of cases where Korean students have ridiculed and bullied younger Japanese American students and this story placed in text books will not help ease the situation. **Your Department of Education must use sound judgment and avoid an astronomical mistake.**

To add a 75 year old unrelated Comfort Woman issue to your text books will serve no purpose, except to prolong the insult to the heritage of the Japanese Americans in the United States who had absolutely nothing to do with actions attributed to Japan during and well before World War II. The hatred shown by the Korean people towards the Japanese in Japan and Japanese Americans will only be intensified by inclusion in text books.

Japanese Americans as American citizens were severely punished by the U.S. Government in World War II solely because of their ancestry and they do not want to have to fight their way out of another racial humiliation.

It is very important for you to understand that today, we have many new young generations of Korean and Japanese Americans who hold no animosity and

are very good friends, including marriages. To renew an over 75 year old issue by including it in text books will only help destroy those friendships that have developed over two generations. Please do not create an unnecessary situation.

To give you a perfect example of the misconceptions this issue will continue to produce if placed in your text books, in June 2015 two Korean High school students wrote the following comment in their Sunny Hills High School webpage 'theacolade', "Japanese American citizens were against the construction [of the monument] because they don't want to admit their faults in starting human trafficking during war time when they brought young Asian women to Japan as sex slaves, Kim said" I emphasize to you the words JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS.

For your information, in case your texts books don't include this part of American history, the citizens Kim is referring to are the over 120,000 incarcerated Japanese Americans during World War II. Over 15,000 were away serving in the armed services fighting for the very country that took away their rights as the citizens referred to by Kim. I would like Kim's explanation how the Japanese Americans were able to accomplish such a feat of human trafficking during World War II while incarcerated or fighting in Europe to try and secure our freedom from the internment camps and prove the loyalty of Japanese Americans.

For your additional information, I have attached copies of the webpage "theacolade", a copy of my response to the webpage, a copy of my letter to the Fullerton Joint Union High School District and a copy of my attorney's response to the School District's legal counsel. My letter to the FJUHS was to notify them I had engaged an attorney to possibly sue the District, the High School faculty involved and the students for such a libelous, slanderous and humiliating public statement.

This type of misconstrued mentality is what your text books will teach students. The rest of this story is in your hands.

Sincerely,

(s)

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